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Winter 2017 volume 49, number 3

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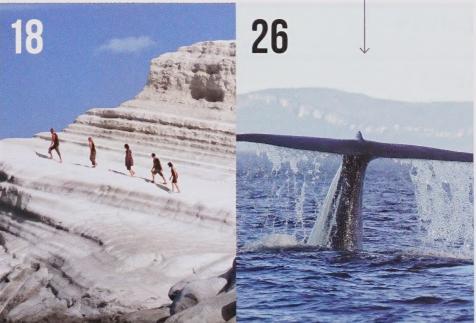
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Bringing a blue whale to the ROM







GWEN ADAMS TECHNICIAN. **ASIAN COLLECTIONS**

As the technician of the ROM's Asian Collections, Gwen oversees one of the largest and most comprehensive collections outside of China. Gwen is fascinated with Asian art, especially propaganda posters and the Gutai movement.



SARAH CHU DIGITAL LEARNING SPECIALIST, LEARNING

Sarah works in ROM Learning and oversees the on-site digital learning and online distance learning experiences for K-12 school groups. She is a proponent of playful learning. Her academic research focuses on learning through creative making, and the informal learning and literacy practices of players in games.



SEBASTIAN KVIST ASSOCIATE CURATOR **OF INVERTEBRATES**

As a researcher, Sebastian focuses on evolutionary biology and the forces that shape and drive evolution. That seems like a big topic, but his main interest is the evolution of blood-feeding leeches.



FILIP SZAFIROWSKI **ENVIRONMENTAL** STORYTELLER

Filip is a student in the **Environmental Visual** Communication postgraduate program. In combination with his background in Environmental Science from the University of Guelph, Filip aims to bridge the gap between scientists and the public using visual narratives.

CONTACT US

Questions? Comments? Email us at magazine@rom.on.ca.

VISIT US

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HOURS

Saturday to Thursday: 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Friday: 10:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

ROM LIBRARY & ARCHIVES Public hours

Monday to Friday 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

ADMISSION PRICES

ROM Members: FREE* Children 3 and under: FREE Children (4-14 years): \$14 Youth (15-19 years): \$15.50 Students: \$15.50 Seniors: (65+) \$17 Adults: \$20

Feature exhibitions are an additional \$11 for adults, \$10 for seniors/students, and \$6 for children.

Admission is free on Tuesdays for Canadian post-secondary students with ID.

Museum and Arts Pass Program participant.

*All adult Members must present a valid membership card and photo ID. Membership cards are not transferable except for RPC members.

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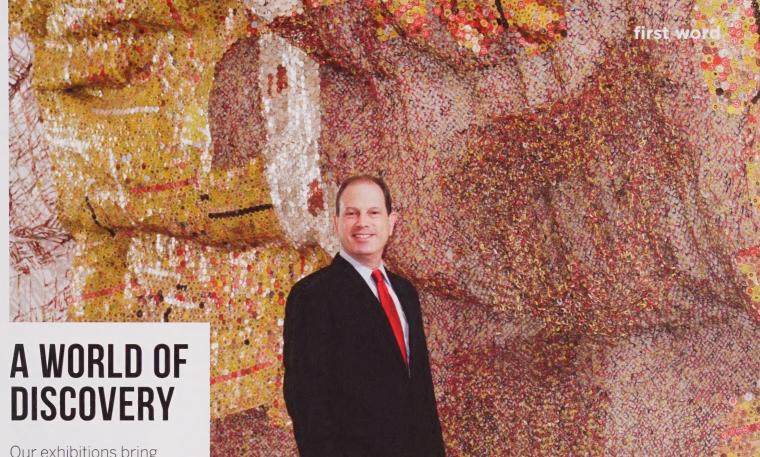


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Our exhibitions bring ROM research to life

he ROM has always been a different kind of museum, dedicated to both the public it serves and to expanding the boundaries of knowledge. It was founded more than 100 years ago by our first director, Charles Currelly, whose mission was to share the wonders of the world with his fellow Canadians.

Over the decades, the ROM has become a global museum where object-based research and laboratory investigation come together with fieldwork to inform our world-class exhibitions. Last year, our curators conducted research in 27 countries, their findings published in almost 100 academic journals worldwide, making the ROM the largest field research institute in Canada.

This quest for discovery through research is a testament to our commitment to deepening our collective knowledge. Our curatorial team opens eyes and minds to important issues and parts of the world that might otherwise be overlooked. And while doing so, we illuminate the many connections between ourselves and the world around us.

In this issue of ROM magazine, you'll see the fruit of that prolific research.

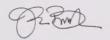
The Blue Whale story on page 26 is an excellent example of how our curatorial researchers help us better understand the world. More than just an exhibition featuring the spectacle of the largest creature that ever lived, Out of the Depths: The Blue Whale Story, uncovers fascinating new scientific insights into these resilient and mysterious creatures. This immersive exhibition, which opens on March 11, not only deepens our

knowledge of the whale's surprising biology and under-sea life, but also proposes ways we can help save the Blue Whale from extinction.

Also featured in this issue is a story based on Art, Honour, and Ridicule: Asafo Flags from Southern Ghana, an exhibition inspired by the research of ROM curator Silvia Forni, which runs through September 4. The show provides a unique window onto the complex culture of the Asafo military companies of southern Ghana and the use of visually compelling motifs and iconography in the design of their singular flags.

As you thumb through the magazine, don't miss our interview with pioneering film and video artist, Isaac Julien. His topical Other Destinies exhibition at the ROM, which opened on January 21, consists of two ground-breaking film projects that examine issues of geography, migration, and displacement.

I encourage you to make full use of your ROM Membership: come visit the museum this winter; experience these compelling exhibitions; take advantage of our dynamic programming. A world of wonder and discovery awaits you.



JOSH BASSECHES ROM DIRECTOR AND CEO





WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR Discover more of the natural world with striking wildlife and captivating landscapes—on now!



ROM MAKERSPACE Connect with the ROM's collection through experiential hands-on activities in this new learning centre

member news

calendar / special events / special offers / meet a member

FEBRUARY & MARCH

ROMSpeaks ISAAC JULIEN LECTURE SERIES

TRUE NORTH: RACE, SEXUALITY AND SCIENCE IN ARCTIC EXPLORATION

February 7, 7 p.m. Members: \$18 Public: \$20

Inspired by African-American Arctic explorer Matthew Henson, Isaac Julien's True North attempts to re-visualize the Arctic from a Black perspective. Join Lisa E. Bloom, as she explores True North in the context of environmental politics, questioning how race and sexuality can relate to present-day issues of climate change, science, and technology.

ANNUAL DARWIN DAY LECTURE

SEX IN THE SEA February 14, 7 p.m. Members: \$18 Public: \$20

Researcher Marah J. Hardt takes you through the fascinating, erotic, and elaborate mating rituals of sea creatures. Discover the creative procreation that drives the wild abundance of life in the ocean, and the challenges facing these processes today.

ANNUAL VAUGHAN LECTURE

OF AFRICA: THINGS, PEOPLE AND IDEAS

February 28, 7 p.m. Members: \$18 Public: \$20

Join us for a keynote presentation by one of the ROM's researchers who has demonstrated extraordinary work over their career, with highlights from the past year.

The Vaughan Lecture Fund was established with a generous gift from the estate of Nora E. Vaughan in 1994 to support the ROM's Annual Vaughan Lecture.

ISAAC JULIEN LECTURE SERIES

MIGRATION: PEOPLE, **PLACES & POLITICS**

March 7, 7 p.m. Members: \$18 Public: \$20

Renowned British contemporary artist Isaac Julien addresses issues of globalization, movements of peoples, displacement, and the aesthetics of geography through his work. Explore how these difficult and sensitive topics intersect with art in this engaging and thought-provoking lecture series. Our panel of experts will discuss transnational migrations, and their historic and current economic and political causes.

ANNUAL CHINESE ART & CULTURE LECTURE

JADE: CHINA'S **IMMORTAL STONE**

March 28, 7 p.m. Members: \$18 Public: \$20

Celebrate the ancient Chinese tradition of jade sculpture with international scholar Jenny F. So.

ROMU

ROME: BRILLIANCE & BARBARISM

March 5, 10:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Members: \$72

Public: \$80 Explore the many facets of

ancient Roman history and culture with ROM Educator George Hewson. This in-depth introduction will include visits to the ROM's permanent collections, illustrated talks, and hands-on classroom experiences. Lunch will be provided.

COMING UP

Member Preview

THE FAMILY CAMERA Friday, May 5, 2017 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 6, 2017 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

ANISHINAABEG: **ART & POWER**

Friday, June 16, 2017, 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Saturday, June 17, 2017, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

FIND OUT MORE

Visit rom.on.ca/whatson Call 416.586.5797



Watch for your Member eCommunications in the new year about preview opening remarks and lectures by ROM experts.

Member Preview —

OUT OF THE DEPTHS: THE BLUE WHALE STORY



Friday, March 10 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. (last entry 9:00 p.m.)

Saturday, March 11 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Join us for an exclusive preview and lectures by ROM curators.



MEMBER EVENTS

WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR MEMBER PREVIEW

The Member Exclusive Preview of *Wildlife Photographer* of the Year, the longest-running and most prestigious nature photography competition in the world, was held on November 11 and 12, 2016.

Members turned out in large numbers to take in the striking wildlife and captivating landscape shots from around the world, as well as to hear remarks from Mark Peck, ROM Technician,

Ornithology, and Dave Ireland, Managing Director, Centre of Discovery Biodiversity.

Featuring new photographs from the 2016 competition, Wildlife Photographer of the Year continues to move viewers with the striking beauty and diversity of the natural world. Be sure to visit and see the exhibition before it closes on March 19, 2017.





HOLIDAY FAMILY GATHERING

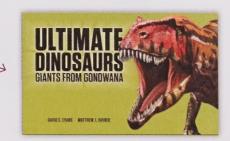
The Annual Holiday Family Gathering was held on December 4, 2016. Over 400 Museum Circle, Director's Circle and Patrons Circle Members gathered for a fun-filled day of treats, crafts, face-painting and a visit with Santa. We hope you enjoyed the day—thank you for such a great turnout!



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MEMBER ROMWALKS



INSTRUMENTS AND

An overture to encourage your further exploration of the music and architecture of the ROM, the Royal Conservatory and the U of T Faculty of Music

Meeting point:

Royal Ontario Museum, Rotunda, Level 1. April 23, 2017 1:00 p.m.

PARKDALE

Learn about the history of Parkdale from its beginnings as a prosperous suburb of early Toronto to a newly revitalized neighbourhood that serves as home to many new immigrants.

Meeting Point:

South east corner of Queen Street West and Cowan Avenue outside Parkdale Library. May 20, 2017 1:00 p.m.

KENSINGTON MARKET

Join us as we wander through what was once the old Jewish Market, past late Victorian buildings that have undergone considerable change over the years, and onto the campus of the University of Toronto. Memories of times past mix with the modern life of condos, restaurants, and music,

Meeting point:

South west corner of **Dundas Street West and** Denison Avenue.

June 17, 2017 1:00 p.m.



Look for the purple ROMWalks umbrella at the meeting places.

Registration is required as space is limited. www.rom.on.ca/members/events

SHARE YOUR SENSE OF WONDER WITH A ROM GIFT MEMBERSHIP

ROM membership makes the perfect gift for birthdays, weddings, graduations, or end of school year teacher gifts. Give the gift of unlimited free admission to ROM galleries and exhibitions as well as Member-only benefits all year long.



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BATA SHOE MUSEUM March 25 & 26, 2017 327 Bloor Street West Toronto



GARDINER MUSEUM April 8 & 9, 2017 111 Queen's Park Toronto



THEMUSEUM April 22 & 23, 2017 10 King Street West Kitchener



AGA KHAN MUSEUM June 3 & 4, 2017 77 Wynford Drive North York

*Valid ROM membership card required for entry. rom.on.ca/ members/events for more information.



MEMBER PROFILE

Strolling at the ROM

NEW MOM ERIN SENIOR SHARES HER EXPERIENCE OF ENJOYING THE ROM WITH HER NEWBORN DAUGHTER

Erin Senior recently enrolled in the ROM's Baby & Me: Strolling the ROM, a program designed to give parents and caregivers a chance to enjoy adult learning and conversation at the Museum in a baby-friendly atmosphere. The program, which runs one day per week for six weeks, is limited to children aged two and younger and is led by a Museum Teacher.



How often do you visit the ROM's Baby & Me program?

This was our first time enrolling in the program. We attended almost every session over the 6 weeks.

What inspired your first visit to the Baby & Me program?

Our daughter went to the ROM when she was 11 days old and she had a blast. The Baby & Me program guaranteed we had one activity out of the house per week, lifting us out of the day-to-day schedule. Surprisingly, as much as Hearned about Egyptian mummies or dinosaurs. I also learned how to handle my baby's needs while out and about in the city.

If you could bring one person to visit the Museum with you, who would it be (and why)?

I would bring my husband, of course. We have such a good time hanging out, so he would be my first choice.

What word can be used to describe your experience at the ROM?

Accessible. As in, one has access to culture, history, and interesting artifacts while simultaneously having access to family-friendly facilities. It's a paradise for a new mom. Quiet, interesting things to look at, a yummy cafe, friendly staff-I mean, what more could you want?

5 Are there specific places in the Museum you find yourself coming back to visit? I keep on coming back to the Geological display. Some artifacts have a "louder" presence than others. The minerals, rocks and gems are quietly compelling and I enjoy the factual and

Is there a favourite object in the Museum that stands out to you as something you would like to have in your own home?

otherworldliness of them.

On our last day of the program we were treated to 30 minutes

in the Star Lab. All the moms and babies sat in the dark, feeding, looking at our solar systems and hearing tales about constellations. It was all very delightful and I wanted to share this experience with my husband too. So, please, may I have the Star Lab for a month?

ROM to a friend who had How would you describe the never visited the ROM before? Like a National Geographic magazine in the flesh and bones.

If you were to plan a perfect day out with your family, what would you plan to do before and after your time spent at the ROM?

Well, we have a four-month-old baby, so planning a day out usually means trying to do only one thing. That said, a perfect day out with our family would include brunch nearby, a leisurely walk from our apartment through the residential streets of Toronto until we came to the Museum. We would then have enough uninterrupted time to explore

the Museum and then likely have a little treat at the pop-up cafes on Avenue and Bloor before moving on to dinner somewhere new. Also, there would be several naps along the way.

Have you had any experiences at the ROM that we haven't asked about? We saw the *Pompeii* exhibition last year with some good friends. As part of the exhibition you could experience wearing a toga. So we gave a toga a try and much hilarity ensued. This experience very much endeared me to the Museum.

Registration is required for the Baby & Me program, please call 416.586.5797 or email programs@rom.on.ca for details.

dispatches

war prints / mystery label / cultural corridor

NEW ACQUISITION

Illustrating a War

NEW ACQUISITION PRINTS BY JAPANESE ARTIST OGATA GEKKŌ By GWEN ADAMS

The ROM is fortunate to have recently received a large bequest of 645 Japanese prints, paintings, and illustrated books by the Meiji-period artist Ogata Gekkō (1859–1920). This gift was generously donated by a retired law librarian at York University, Balfour Halévy. We are still processing this large acquisition and appreciating Halévy's organizational skills as we go through numerous boxes containing his original receipts, archives, and accompanying documentation on every print that he ever purchased.

What is intriguing about this collection is that the majority of the works are by a single artist. Gekkō is considered an important ukiyo-e artist of the Meiji period (1868-1912). Gekkō never attended any formal art school, nor did he undergo any traditional apprenticeship in a printmaker's studio. A self-taught artist, he was an important member of the Meiji Fine Art Society. Gekkō's work was influenced by traditional Japanese painting, and his woodblock prints are often described as a bridge between the old ukiyo-e tradition and modern Japanese prints.

Gekkō had a knack for self-promotion in a society that discouraged it. He began his art career by preparing flyers and taking them around to various publishers and places as a way of selling his services as an illustrator. Gekkō was able to then get work painting lacquer and illustrating for books and newspapers. These experiences made him a versatile artist and helped him develop his own style when he turned to printmaking. However, the uniqueness of his artwork might have caused some problems for the carvers and printers as his designs often resembled those of watercolour and oil paintings, not the traditional ukiyo-e-style prints where lines were clear and areas of the same colour were separated.

Halévy quickly realized that Gekkō produced a number of exceptional masterpieces: his prints from the Sino-Japanese War (August 1, 1894 to April 17, 1895), for example. The Sino-Japanese War was fought between China and Japan over control of Korea. With the addition of Halévy's gift of 58 triptychs and one rare quadriptych (below), Kaiyôtô senryô kaisen no zu (Naval Battle Capturing Haiyang Island) we now have 95 war prints in the collection.

Succeeding as a war artist meant that you were required to work under dangerous conditions, and you needed to sketch rapidly in order to quickly produce and distribute your prints. In general, prints depicting scenes from the Sino-Japanese War were considered ephemeral and were not meant to be regarded as great works of art. The majority were produced to accompany news reports from the frontlines, to be printed in newspapers or periodicals circulating in Japan on short notice.

Ogata Gekkō's war prints are significant as they genuinely depict the violence of the battle and convey the horror and emotions of war. Gekkō accompanied the troops onto the battlefields as a war correspondent for a Japanese newspaper. By creating sketches of what he actually experienced. he was able to produce vivid and detailed battle scenes. Many of Gekkö's prints were also used to understand battle tactics and conditions on the front lines. Japanese war prints held important journalistic and propagandistic messages during the Meiji period.









ROMCAN

ENSURING INCLUSION FOR ALL ONTARIANS

Making the Museum accessible to all is a primary mandate of the ROM. To accomplish it, the Museum actively works with 54 diverse partners to ensure our collections, research, and programs are fully available to all residents, regardless of their socio-economic status, ethnicity, age, and mental and physical disabilities. The ROMCAN program, short for the Royal Ontario Museum Community Access Network, was established to ensure the Museum reaches this goal by developing programming to meet the needs of all visitors.

Some of the groups supported through the ROMCAN program are new Canadians, persons with disabilities, the deaf community, seniors at risk, under-represented racialized youth, survivors of violence against women, at-risk Indigenous youth, families and children living in poverty, kids with life-threatening illnesses, and post-secondary students. Each group has a different challenge that needs to be addressed, and programs are developed by ROMCAN to reflect that.

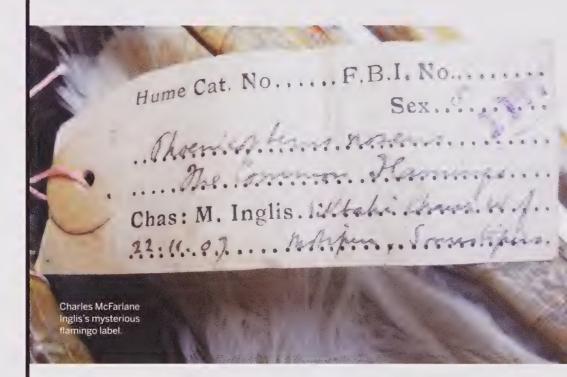
Whether it's tactile exhibition designs, American Sign Language interpreted guided tours, an outreach program focused on Indigenous communities, or the School Visit Bursary Program, ROMCAN is dedicated to ensuring that the ROM is a fully inclusive centre of discovery for all.



The Museum distributed 75,000 free tickets via ROMCAN last year. FROM THE COLLECTIONS

CRACKING THE CODE

A 110-year-old label holds the clue to the exact origin of a common flamingo



Research at the ROM is an ongoing effort—and sometimes we have to turn to a wider audience for help. One label that stumped us is of a flamingo that was collected on November 22, 1907, by Charles McFarlane Inglis in the state of Bihar in India. Inglis was a curator at a museum in Darjeeling from 1926 to 1948. Brad Millen, our Natural History database technician, has been putting together a collecting itinerary for Inglis that ranges from Tirhut, Uttar Pradesh, to Dhatrbanga, Bihar, and on into Sikkim, India.

Having been at the ROM for more than 41 years, Millen has so far been able to decipher all original labels that he has come across in the collection. This particular label, however, threatens to ruin his perfect score. To find out more about the flamingo, Millen checked the original cataloguing information only to find that whoever catalogued the flamingo had given up on identifying its locality.

After a number of tries, a recent Google Maps search allowed him to find the village of Siktahi that is mentioned on the label. What follows after the name of the village is something that he has had trouble deciphering since he first saw this label in 1977. If you can decipher the rest of the information mentioned on the label pictured below, write to Millen at **bradm@rom.on.ca** and help us solve this puzzle.



THE ROM IS AT THE CENTRE OF TORONTO'S CULTURAL CORRIDOR

The ROM and 18 neighbouring organizations have been designated a cultural corridor in the city of Toronto. The project to designate this corridor started in 2014 as a way to connect not only tourists, but also Torontonians with the city's streets. The partnership between the 19 member organizations will promote the area as an important cultural destination. The members will present events throughout the year, with a wide variety of events that include museum and art exhibitions, music concerts. films, theatre, arts classes, locally focused cultural talks, and opportunities to experience some of Toronto's wide cultural diversity, including French, Jewish, Italian, Japanese, Estonian, and Indigenous cultures.

The 1.5-kilometre corridor runs from Bathurst to Bay Street and includes member organizations such as the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, and the Instituto di Cultura. The initiative places Toronto's Bloor Street on par with New York City's Museum Mile and Montreal's famed Quartier des Spectacles.

On September 19, 2016, City Council unanimously approved the organization as the Bloor St. Culture Corridor. City Councillor Joe Cressy explains, "Culture is at the very heart of this corridor. Within the neighbourhood, arts and culture have always been there, and the Bloor St. Culture Corridor has put a stamp on it. This is tremendous for the city; it's tremendous for the organizations who have long given life and vibrancy to the corridor, and for our residents as well. This is an arts district for the whole City of Toronto." The founder of the Bloor St. Culture Corridor, Heather Kelly, says, "We look forward to collaborating with the City, other cultural corridors and consortiums in Toronto and around the world, and to continuing to develop the Bloor St. Culture Corridor as a hub of arts and culture events." For more information on member organizations, please go to bloorstculturecorridor.com.

ROM RESEARCH



DIGESTING DNA

By SEBASTIAN KVIST

The idea of a leech attached to your body is a cringe-worthy nightmare for most people, but for researchers Jonathan Perez-Flores, Helen Rueda-Calderon, Mark E. Siddall, Alejandro Oceguera-Figuroa, and myself, leeches are fascinating invertebrates with great research potential. Our team discovered the first instance of a leech feeding on a manatee. To make sure that this leech was feeding from the unsuspecting manatee, as opposed to just hitching

a ride, we took a sample of ingested DNA(iDNA) from the gut of the leech. To identify the DNA samples, we used the barcoding technique, which compares a short genetic marker in one species to that same marker in another species' DNA. What we found was Antillean manatee DNA inside of the leech, evidence that the leech was feeding on the manatee. Also, the DNA samples showed that the leech in question was Haementeria acuecueyetzin, a species never before recorded from the Mexican state of Chiapas. Because of the lack of proper fixatives in the field, the leeches were preserved in mezcal, a liquor similar to tequila and distilled from cacti. Our study marks the first time that DNA was successfully replicated from an individual preserved in this popular Mexican beverage. Since replicating iDNA was so successful, our team is now looking into the idea of using the iDNA for vertebrate conservation. We published our findings in the Journal of Parasitology in August 2016. The iDNA could tell researchers the approximate diversity of the species in an area, without having to sample the specimens themselves, and possibly identify the individuals in that population. The benefits of using leech-ingested DNA are that leeches are often abundant, making them easier to locate than their vertebrate prey. Leeches and iDNA need to be researched more before the technique can be a viable option, but it does suggest a less invasive way of surveying biodiversity.

ROMPRESS



ART, HONOUR, AND RIDICULE: **ASAFO** FLAGS FROM SOUTHERN **GHANA**

By SILVIA FORNI AND DORAN H. ROSS

For the Asafo military companies of Ghana, warfare was not reserved for the battlefield. Competition among groups often had as much an aesthetic component as a military one. This book accompanies the ROM's Asafo flags exhibition and examines the cultural, political, social, and aesthetic facets of the textile art produced by a number of Fante workshops in central-southern Ghana for the use of the Asafo military companies. This book takes a holistic approach to the analysis of the aesthetic components of the Asafo performances. The striking visual vocabulary of the flags is in fact closely linked to the architectural, sculptural, poetic, performative, and musical expressions of the Fante.

This publication is an extraordinary introduction to the world of visual, chromatic, and narrative competition that characterizes the public display of Asafo companies, available March 2017.

Royal Ontario Museum and Coalition for the Truth about Africa representatives hold a framed version of the ROM apology.



MENDING BRIDGES

Reconciling the Museum's role in the Into the Heart of Africa exhibition

"The Royal Ontario Museum produced the exhibition Into the Heart of Africa, which opened at the Museum in November 1989. This exhibition was intended to critically examine the colonial relationships and premises through which collections from African societies had entered museums.

The exhibition displayed images and words that showed the fundamentally racist ideas and attitudes of early collectors and, in doing so, unintentionally reproduced the colonial, racist and Eurocentric premises through which these collections had been acquired. Thus, Into the Heart of Africa perpetuated an atmosphere of racism and the effect of the exhibition itself was racist. The ROM expresses its deep regret for having contributed to anti-African racism. The ROM also officially apologizes for the suffering endured by members of the African-Canadian community as a result of Into the Heart of Africa.'

The ROM statement of apology as quoted above, was delivered by Dr. Mark Engstrom, the Museum's Deputy Director, Collections and Research, who has guided the reconciliation process for the ROM; Josh Basseches, Director and CEO of the ROM; and Martha Durdin, Chair, ROM Board of Trustees. This statement was accepted by Rostant Rico John, on behalf of the Coalition for the Truth about Africa (CFTA).

In addition to the apology, the ROM recently announced a number of steps it will take in the coming years to continue to strengthen collaboration with African-Canadian communities and help shape the museum of the future. These include enhanced partnerships with Black educational networks, opportunities for training Black youth interested in museums, and continued support of events and lectures that address the history and cultures of Africa and the Diaspora. Working with the CFTA and other community partners, the ROM is committed to sustained and meaningful programming, and acknowledges

"We would like to say on behalf of the African community again, a heartfelt thanks to those people in our community, who have worked hard to bring this to fruition."

-CFTA spokesperson Rostant Rico John

the importance of dialogue and collaboration toward enhancing its collection and public events.

At the reconciliation event on November 9, Rostant Rico John, CFTA spokesperson, said, "Greetings, it is good and pleasant that, on behalf of the CFTA and the African community in Canada, we would like to express our pride in having reached this point of reconciliation after 27 years. It took many gallant efforts by people inside and outside of the ROM to reconcile and both the ROM

and CFTA worked diligently, persistently, and consistently to arrive at this agreement.'

Cheryl Blackman, who represented the ROM in the reconciliation process, outlined other related initiatives the ROM has undertaken to support this mandate that will help define the Museum's role in the larger community.

The ROM will support two internships each year and work with African outreach programs to ensure the inclusion of the community. The ROM will also draft an inclusion policy and one member of the CFTA will be on the advisory committee. Julie Crooks, Dominique Fontaine, and the ROM's Silvia Forni will co-curate a new exhibition called Black Canada, showcasing eight contemporary Black artists and sharing their stories of being Black in Canada. Both the ROM and the CFTA are committed to moving forward as partners in the cultural community.

ROM Game Jam

EVERYBODY LEARNS (UNLESS THEY GO EXTINCT)

By ELIZABETH O'GRADY

A hundred game developers participated in the fourth annual ROM Game Jam, which took place September 16 to 18, 2016.





hen was the last time you built a pyramid, collected rocks on Mars, or had to watch out for Komodo dragons? ROM Game Jam's engaging approach to science communication makes learning an adventure.

Started in 2012, this annual event brings together game developers and ROM experts in an intense hackathon. For 48 hours, fingers fly across keyboards as creativity, coding, and coffee generate digital games related to the ROM's collections.

This year's theme was the Dawn of Life, complementing the Museum's forthcoming permanent gallery of that name. The new display will tell the story of life on Earth from its origins almost four billion years ago up to the first dinosaurs. This vast scope has resulted in games as diverse as a Tetris-style game about fossilization, a children's puzzle game, and a dating app.

Organizer Dr. Marianne Mader, Hatch Managing Director, Centres for Earth & Space and Fossils & Evolution at the ROM, explained the connections between the Museum and the jam: "Both provide multiple layers of learning. At Game Jam, participants learn to work together to build a game, novice developers learn from experienced professionals, and everyone learns from the ROM's in-depth information, tours, and access to curators. The public beta-tests the games, so they learn through play."

The cycle of learning doesn't stop there, noted participant Dan Fisher. "Making video games can be lonely if you never see people enjoying your work. Partnering with the ROM let us observe kids play-testing the game: this helped us make it better." Teachers can also book a school visit where students create their own game to animate the Museum's exhibits.

Mader concluded, "The sense of community at our jam is amazing. When the games were presented on the last day, everyone was cheering for all the teams."

Find selected games on the Learning Portal website at rom.on.ca/en/learn, along with teaching notes. To date, two games have been commercialized: Clash of the Talons is available at lasthourgames.com, and Astro-Miners at astrominers.ca.





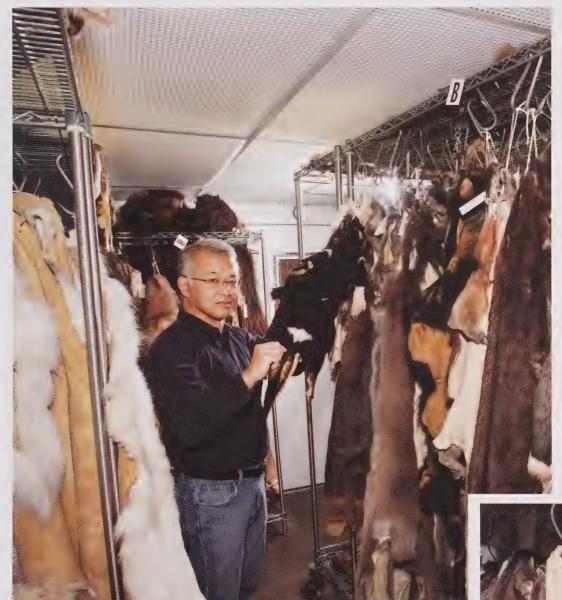


This program is generously supported by Barrick Gold Corpor Photos by David Coulson Matthew Brocklehurst and Tiffany I

WHAT'S IN OUR FRIDGE

A peek inside a cold storage research room

Lim inside



What is the pelt room?

This is a 20 squaremetre cold storage room maintained at a temperature of 5°C to better preserve tanned mammal skins. It contains tanned skins of over 300 species of larger-sized mammals, including panda and tiger.

Who works there?

Mammalogy staff at the ROM have access to this locked room as some of the specimens are fur-bearing mammals that are of commercial value.

How are the pelts acquired?

The 3 main sources of tanned skins are the Toronto Zoo, who donated many exotic species that were on display, the Ministry of Natural Resources, who contributed species of Ontario mammals from local hunters and trappers, and ROM-based expeditions.

How does the pelt room feature in ROM research?

The specimens are an historical record of species diversity spanning over 100 years and from throughout the world. One of its main uses is a comparative collection for identification purposes of endangered species.

The Champions of Bat Conservation

HOW BATS CONTRIBUTE TO OUR ECOSYSTEM By FILIP SZAFIROWSKI

he midday sun beams down brightly as a boat slowly motors up the immensely wide Tambopata River. Everyone on board is silent in anticipation, listening and looking for the opportunity to spot a capybara or a group of capuchin monkeys. They're also anxiously awaiting what's to come upon arrival at their destination in the remote tropical forest.

The Tambopata River is located in the southeast of Peru, cutting through the western Amazon Basin-a biodiversity hot-spot. Peru is home to the largest number of bird species in the world, with over 800 of them being found in the Peruvian Amazon. But it's not birds that the 20 passengers are interested in.

Seated on board are 14 students from across Latin America and one student from the United States. Also on the boat are five instructors from around the world: Tania Gonzalez-Terrazas and Rodrigo Medellin from Mexico, Marco Tchapka from Germany, Valeria Tavares from Brazil, and the ROM's very own Burton Lim, representing Canada. Despite the geographic diversity of the group, everyone is coming together to study one of the world's most misunderstood mammals: bats.

The group is travelling upstream to the Sachavacayoc Field Station. The station is nestled along the edge of the river and a short hike away from the Tambopata National Reserve. The rainforest of more than one million hectares harbours some of the wildest. least-impacted habitats in the world. This area of the Peruvian Amazon is home to roughly 130 species of bats, serving as the perfect setting for students and instructors alike to track down and study as many as they can find.

Upon arrival, the students are immediately thrown into an intensive 100-hour, 10-day field course. The International Bat Field Course, in addition to covering nearly every aspect of bat biology, is a golden opportunity for the students to work alongside some of the most respected bat scientists in the world.

When darkness falls, the group becomes nocturnal. avoiding the urge to sleep. They traipse through the rainforest at night guided only by their headlamps. They disregard the weather and biting insects, travel far, and traverse difficult terrain, keeping in mind that they'll





have to repeat the journey in reverse to return. In spite of these difficulties, not even so much as a grumble emanates from the fervent group.

At night, bats whiz by overhead. Equipped with ultrasonic bat detectors, the students can listen in on their chatter. To catch bats, nets with very fine mesh, called mist nets, are strategically placed throughout the rainforest, near food sources and potential roosting spots. The group attempts to detect and capture as many as possible of the over 130 bat species that take to the sky at night.

Night after night, the team captures several new species and learns something new about the only mammal capable of flight. The

DEPENDING ON THE SPECIES, BATS CAN FEED ON:





Fruit





Vertebrates (including other bats)



66

By the end of the course, the team will have caught 44 different species of bats and recorded at least another dozen more.

"

variation between bat species is among the largest in any group of mammals due to their diverse feeding habits. Depending on the species, bats can feed on insects, fruit, nectar, vertebrates (including other bats), and blood. By the end of the course, the team will have caught 44 different species of bats and recorded at least another dozen more. Both the students and the instructors gaze upon species they had never seen before.

But there's one pivotal facet of the course that isn't explicitly mentioned in the course content. The instructors are using this field course as a vehicle to inspire a new generation of bat researchers, educators, and environmentalists. It's time for future scientists to continue to fight for the conservation of bats across the globe.

Bram Stoker's nineteenth century classic Dracula took advantage of the world's misunderstanding of bats. The story cemented them as being associated with fear and darkness. In Peru, some capture and kill bats for black magic and non-traditional medicines, while others poison them in an effort to eradicate them. Bat scientists have been tenaciously pushing past bats' notoriety to shine a light on their ecological importance.

Throughout their journey in the jungle, the students learn about the ecosystem

services that bats provide. Fruit-eating bats disperse seeds of various fruits to the same degree that birds do. Bats also pollinate a variety of plants such as agave, which open their flowers only after the sun goes down. Lastly, insectivorous bats can eat two-thirds of their body weight in insects, making them experts in the art of pest control.

After learning about the benefits that bats provide to their ecosystems, the students work hard on applying this knowledge to their fieldwork. Not to be outdone, the instructors tirelessly input data, record measurements, and prepare for the next day's lesson long into the night. Their dedication to the course is indicative of their lifelong passion and devotion to the study of bats.

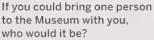
Being taught by some of the superstars of the bat world validated the students' decisions to attend the course. With so much remarkable work already done on studying and conserving bats, these students will have some big shoes to fill. This course was aimed at taking some of the mystery out of the world of bats, but it also took some of the mystery out of the lives of professional bat scientists. It won't be long before these students will be inspiring the next wave of bat champions.



PROFILE

David Suzuki

The award-winning scientist, environmentalist, and broadcaster has been making the complex natural world easier to understand in the most compelling way for over 30 years. David Suzuki started off his broadcasting career on CBC Radio's Quirks and Quarks from 1974 to 1979. The Nature of Things with David Suzuki is now in its 56th season on CBC TV and still going strong. The only network television science host who was actually a practising scientist, Suzuki is the author of 40 books and holds 24 honorary degrees. His award-winning TV show keeps him busy but we were lucky enough to connect with him to ask about the changing world and how the ROM inspires him.



My seven-year-old grandson, Gahnlaans Brown-Suzuki.

What inspired your first ROM visit?

I was an avid insect collector and wanted to see the insects at the ROM.

How often do you visit the ROM?

The Museum is visually impactful so we find ourselves filming there when we need a great backdrop.

Are there specific places in the Museum you find yourself coming back to visit?

When I visit with a grandchild, they always want to see the mummies.

With the biodiversity galleries here at the ROM being popular, do you find it inspiring to see how many young people care about the planet?

They give me hope. Urban

children today spend hours in front of a screen but only minutes outside. So the fact that they still find nature entrancing gives me hope that they have not lost the love I believe we are all born with, what E.O. Wilson refers to as biophilia.

How would you describe the ROM to a friend who has never visited before?

It is a place that can surprise and amaze with both human ingenuity and nature's splendour. I also find it humbling. We twenty-first-century humans are so impressed with ourselves, with our scientific advances and technological prowess, but it is humbling to see how clever and inventive people have been in the distant past.

What word can describe your experience at the ROM? Enchanting.





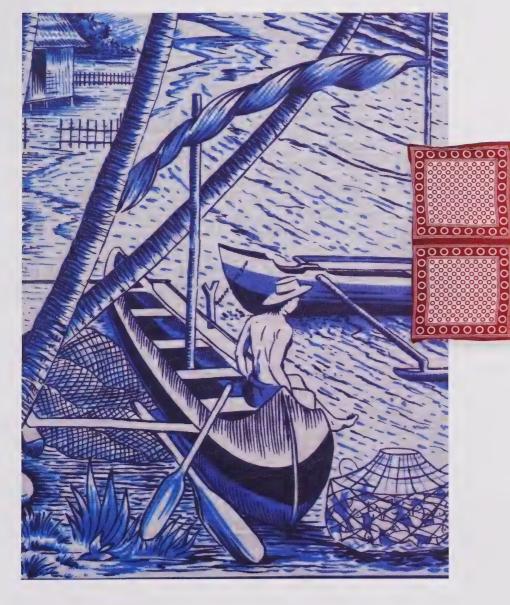
Where in the World Are They?

WHO IS WHERE—AND WHY—AMONG OUR INTERNATIONAL **CURATORIAL TEAM**

In May 2016 Sarah Fee undertook research at museums and archives in Aix-en-Provence, France, and London, England, to document the trade in dyes, yarn, and finished cloth that circulated between western India and eastern Africa in the nineteenth century. It has long been assumed that by the 1900s, cloth made in European factories quickly wiped out local cloth making in this part of the world. Instead, as Fee is finding by reading reports and studying objects in museums, artisans adopted and adapted new technologies and trade goods, including British mill-made yarn and new dyes such as cochineal (from an insect native of Mexico), to enliven their crafts. France and England are especially rich in associated documents and artifacts as both countries were eager to market their industrial cloth to Zanzibar, the great port of eastern Africa in the nineteenth century, and so took copious notes and collected many samples of local production. This work is in support of a book Fee is co-editing, An Ocean of Cloth: Textile Trades and Consumer Cultures in the Indian Ocean, that will be published in 2017.



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ABOVE: A cotton rollerprinted woman's Shiromani, exported to Nzwane, Comoros. A cotton rollerprinted lambahoany from Madagascar.



he ROM's Centre of Contemporary Culture is the Museum's window on a contemporary society, offering opportunities to engage with the work of key thinkers of our time. A new exhibition featuring the work of London-based artist Isaac Julien at the ROM from January 21 to April 23 is testament to this commitment.

Julien is a pioneering film and video artist whose multi-screen installations address the challenging and sensitive issues of globalization, movements of people, displacement, and the aesthetics of geography. This first major Toronto

showing, Isaac Julien: Other Destinies, presents two of his films, WESTERN UNION: Small Boats (2007) is an immersive, multi-screen experience that explores the notions of diaspora and transnational identities. True North (2004) uses landscape as a key theme, inspired by the story of Matthew Henson, an African-American polar explorer. Both underscore how effective contemporary art can be in illuminating the difficult historical, contemporary, social, and political issues affecting our world.

Julien's work has been shown at film festivals, museums, and galleries

around the world since 1982. His works are in public and private collections. including the Tate (London), the Museum of Modern Art (New York), Centre Pompidou (Paris), and the Guggenheim Museum (New York), among others. Ten Thousand Waves, his nine-screen installation presented at MoMA, was among the world's top 20 exhibitions in 2014.

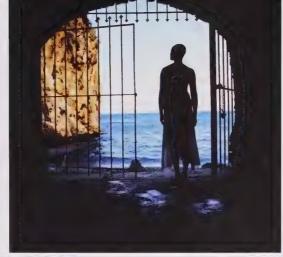
The new ROM exhibition showcases two of Julien's deeply political and poetic installations, as he explores issues of migrations through a sensually rich and evocative narrative.

exhibition

LEFT: WESTERN UNION Series No. 3 (Flight Towards Other Destinies 2), 2007. RIGHT: WESTERN UNION Series No. 1 (Cast No Shadow),

MIDDLE ROW: True North Series. 2004.

BOTTOM: WESTERN UNION Series No. 8 (Sculpture for the New Millennium), 2007.











PROPHETIC & POIGNANT

How have the social and political issues addressed in these films become more or less relevant since you made them?

True North plays with a strong Canadian theme, talking about Indigenous cultures, planet in the Arctic regions. The issues surdevastation that's taking place in this part of the world resonate much more strongly now. prophetic, as it looks at migration. People are struck by how contemporary it feels. No one how the legions of people migrating would have increased exponentially each year Since 2007, there have been so many or economic migrants drowning at sea. with global immigration policies generating controversy on a daily basis

These pieces deal with different issues, but how do they relate?

These works both relate directly to important political issues. They each raise what I call "planetary" questions, those one to the indifference to the way parts of the Earth are disappearing, and one to the policies surrounding migrant people who are prepared to die fighting for a better life

HOW TO SEE IT

Presented by



Isaac Julien: Other Destinies January 21 to April 23, 2017

This first major showing of Julien's work in Toronto showcases two standout film installations—WESTERN UNION: Small Boats (2007) and True North (2004). This ROM exhibition is just a part of Toronto's planned spotlight on Julien; the Images Festival will present a retrospective of his works in 2017 and OCAD University has invited him to participate in a three-week residency in conjunction with the ROM exhibition. Visit rom.on.ca for more details.





Making Room for Making

CO-CREATING A MAKERSPACE AT THE ROM
By SARAH CHU

welve years after the first issue of *Make* magazine, the so-called maker movement is still not showing signs of slowing down. Instead, it continues to grow with increasing momentum. The movement is characterized by a "learning through doing" ethos and an emphasis on process, creativity, iteration, and experimentation. Emerging educational research in recent years has started to investigate how dedicated making environments, or makerspaces, are key sites for collaborative learning and innovation. Makerspaces, often equipped with 3D printers, laser cutters, woodworking equipment, art and craft supplies, electronic components, and sewing machines, are where people gather to create things within a social setting. These spaces can be found everywhere—in schools, public libraries, museums, and local neighbourhood studios.

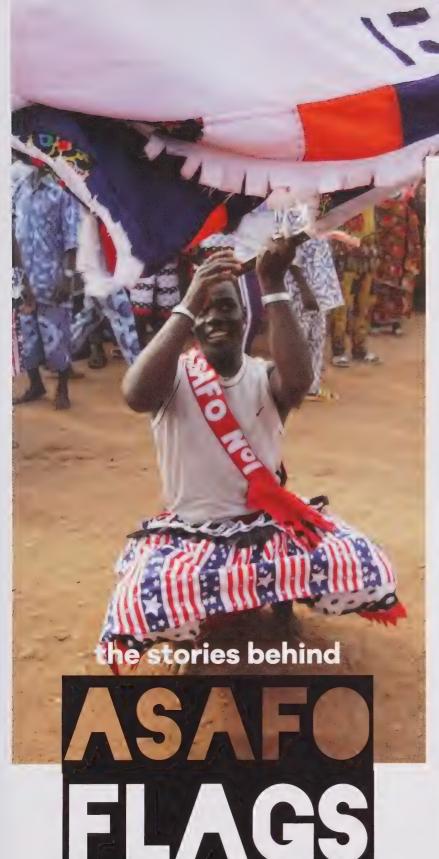
In the fall of 2016, the Learning department at the ROM launched its own makerspace, the ROM Makerspace. This room is a digitally enhanced creative learning studio with a mission to support students in building their personal connections to the Museum's collection through traditional and digital making activities. In one of our programs, students explore the interactions among First Nations and Europeans in New France and Early Canada through our collection, then create digital stories about interactions from their own lives. But maker activities are not new to the ROM. The kids who come through our doors for our kids' and family programs like Summer Club and Family Fundays have experienced for decades the magic of making through art and science projects like soapstone carving and growing crystals. The ROM Makerspace extends these kinds of hands-on experiences to Grade K-12 school groups who visit the Museum for their class field trips.

Makerspaces are often described as participatory spaces where people share ideas and techniques, build on one another's expertise, and support one another's projects. The practice of making is about the people, not the stuff. It's about empowering people to create, to express their identity, to reflect on their learning, and to share their work. It's about being frustrated together, failing together, and working together to learn and grow together.

One of my highlights this past summer was working with 8- to 14-year-olds in a pilot program in which they 3D-designed and printed their own crystals, inspired by the Museum's stunning collection of rocks and minerals. A student who participated in this activity came up to me excitedly at the end of the program and said, "There's a 3D printer at the library near my house. My dad took the course to use it. I know how to make my own objects now, so I'm going to 3D print them at the library with him!" What's significant about what this student said is less that he developed the competency to design 3D objects, but more that he gained a shared experience with his dad. Research has shown that intergenerational and collaborative learning fosters people's lifelong learning.

And while our new ROM Makerspace programs encourage individual expression and emphasize personal interpretation of our Museum objects and research, individual making and learning is almost always situated within a larger socio-cultural context that includes connected communities like schools, families, and peer groups. As we continue to develop the space, and in true collaborative maker spirit, one perspective that will always underpin our work is understanding that making is ultimately a community endeavour.

LEARN MORE To learn more about our ROM Makerspace programs, visit **rom.on.ca/en/learn/makerspace**. We would love to see the things you make or hear about your maker activity ideas! Contact us at **romlearning@rom.on.ca**.



A look at how animals are represented on Asafo flags

By SILVIA FORNI

Art, Honour, and Ridicule: Asafo Flags from Southern Ghana balances historical and contemporary views of Asafo flags. The flags, or mfrankaa, are the prized possession of the Asafo companies. They are created for the numerous militia states along the coast of southern Ghana; historically, they were used to commemorate the installation of new leaders, recall historical events, or assert a company's superiority. Traditionally these companies were in charge of the protection of their local communities as well as warfare. The images displayed on the Asafo flags reference the proverbial knowledge of the Akan (the modern-day people of Ghana), European heraldic images, or other iconographic sources from Fante textile artists. The images displayed on the flags were made by stitching small pieces of fabric onto a larger one to make a pattern or design. Though they started off as symbols of war, today they are used during funerals and ceremonies, and are celebrated in festivals throughout Ghana.

exhibition

The exhibition features over 100 objects—including 35 original flags, regalia, musical instruments, ceremonial headgear, and videos of performances—that relate to the visual and performing arts of the Fante militias. Art, Honour, and Ridicule: Asafo Flags from Southern Ghana animates the amazing stories behind the Asafo flags and the people who created them and made them central to Asafo pride.



Flag with Whale and Sailing Ship

The most widespread representations of modernity could probably be said to deal with various forms of European transportation. Undoubtedly, the first of these to engage the imagination of the Fante were the Portuguese sailing ships that arrived on the coast as early as 1471. The fleet of 10 caravels and two cargo ships that arrived in 1482 to start building what the Ghanaian government now calls "Elmina Castle" doubtless made quite an impression. Of particular note are the national and naval flags that were commonplace on such sailing vessels. Warships, both sail and other, became a popular Asafo image in the first half of the twentieth century. At least six Asafo shrines take the shape of a warship; a seventh has a sailing vessel on top of it; and two more shrines feature ship images on them. Despite the ongoing

presence of European ships along the Gold Coast, print media provide the inspiration for most of this shrine and flag imagery.

One remarkable flag in the ROM collection depicts a combination sail and steamship followed closely by a whale. The latter is also a recurring motif on flags and is often juxtaposed with a ship. The most common sayings related to these joined images are "No one can defeat the whale except the ship" or, alternatively, "The ship is stronger than the whale." The whale is the principal symbol of Amanful No. 7 Company Cape Coast, which, in addition to having flags adorned with whales, has a wheeled whale "float," which can be seen at the annual Fetu Afahye on the first Saturday in September.



Elephants

After the lion, the elephant may be the most frequently represented animal in the Asafo corpus. Unlike the lion, the forest elephant was

once relatively common in southern Ghana and is still found in Kakum National Park in the Central Region.

Although the elephant is not as common in European arms as lions or eagles, it did have some representation in commercial trademarks and heraldry, including those of a few Danish and Dutch trading companies along the coast. Notably, it appeared in the arms of the Royal African Company from 1672 until its dissolution in 1752, during which period this company maintained the British trading forts along the coast and focused on the slave, gold, and ivory trades. Distinctive on the arms is an elephant with a castle on its back. Probably more influential, however, was the badge of the British Gold Coast Colony from 1874 to 1957, which featured an elephant standing on a flat plain framed by green

mountains in the background with a palm tree centred immediately behind the pachyderm and the initials "G.C." just below. This image appeared on a wide variety of colonial objects from stationery to official flags and especially on gift items presented to favoured chiefs, including medals. This proliferation may have prompted, or at least further encouraged, the elephant and palm combination on Asafo flags.

The elephant, however, is not always considered at the head of the class in the Fante forests. Another set of flags display an elephant with a duiker on its back; a duiker on a wood stool next to its much larger counterpart; and a duiker being carried in a palanquin. The duiker is one of the smallest and most agile antelopes in the Central Region and is popularly thought to be the most intelligent. The Fante Asafo companies that embrace the duiker describe these images with variations of the phrase, "Although the elephant is largest, it is the duiker that rules the forest" or "Though the elephant is huge the duiker is the elder."





Snake

As in other Akan arts, snakes, both those with specific identities and those that stand for the entire order, have a high-profile role among the Asafo. Snakes are engaged with trees on many Asafo banners—coiled beneath them, wrapped around a trunk, and intertwined with branches. One by the Shama artist Egya Kwaw Ano displays a large coiled snake on top of a tree. One collector, Federico Carmignani, suggests two interpretations of this flag: "A snake does not bite a man without cause" and the now familiar message "Only a brave man will go under a big tree in the forest." Kwamina Amoaku, a flag artist from Anomabo, and Supi R. M. P. Baiden, a military company general, were a little more expansive about a related motif found on the long No. 6 Company Anomabo banner. They explained that the serpent is watching over a tree that is yielding edible seeds to protect them from being plucked by birds, animals, and men; that is, the Asafo company protects anything that is good for the town.

HOW TO SEE IT

Art, Honour, and Ridicule: Asafo Flags from Southern Ghana is on now.

This exhibition is generously supported by The Hon. Charles and Mrs. Anne Dubin Endowment Fund.

Vultures and Crows



One of the most popular animals depicted on the flag is the vulture. This carrion bird is generally perceived as an obnoxious and unsavoury participant in the Fante environment and is, therefore, a convenient metaphor for rivals. A company of vultures appears on flags across the Central Region, often depicted armed with muskets. The blazon on this flag from Nkum No. 2 Company Kromantse, sewn by Badowah around 1970, explicitly translates to "Our enemies are vultures." Rivalling vultures as an insulting reference to competitors is the crow. A flag made in 1968 by Agya Akyeampong, also for Nkum No. 2 Company Kromantse, features five crows and calls forth the related expression "Our enemies are crows." The Akan view vultures and crows as a nuisance, and since they are inedible, they rank rather low on the avian ideological menu.

Content adapted from the book Art, Honor, and Ridicule: Asafo Flags from Southern Ghana by Silvia Forni and Doran H. Ross, coming soon from ROM Press.

GEORGE AFEDZI HUGHES

A prominent figure in African art, George Afedzi Hughes does not stick to one source of creative outlet but blends a combination of performance and painting to bring his creations to life. He earned both a BA in painting and drawing and an MA in art education from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Ghana, then moved to the United States and earned his MFA in painting from Bowling Green State University in Ohio.

His paintings and two-dimensional works are influenced by the turbulence of colonialism and highlight the parallels between the violent history and contemporary global conflicts. Hughes' art heightens awareness of the existence of human atrocities—no matter how harsh they may be—and blurs the distinctions between conflicts and resolutions. Layered with personal references and reflection on broader societal and historical conditions, his art becomes its own form of a visual narrative.

Two pieces of his art, Gold Pyramid and Pruning Cycle, are featured in the Art, Honour, and Ridicule: Asafo Flags from Southern Ghana exhibition. Both paintings reference Hughes's emotional as well as intellectual approach to Asafo flags. Within the paintings Hughes reflects a more personal reading of the narrative and potential of the Asafo flag art form. He does admit that he has addressed this genre of art only by a commission, but he does find the idea of Asafo flag art a very inspiring venue to express and confront a historical premise of displacement and violence that enlightens his more poetic vision.

Hughes' paintings are allegorical, textured, and quite literally visceral, with animal parts, human limbs, and skeletons juxtaposed with weapons and mechanical objects. Contrasts and juxtapositions are a recurrent theme in the artist's work. -BRITTANY BUDANI





George Afedzi Hughes (b.1962) Top: Gold Pyramid 2015 Bottom: Pruning Cycle Acrylic and oil on canvas

out of the depths: the blue whale story

A behind-the-scenes peek at building a big exhibition



ack in late March 2014, nine blue whales were found dead in the ice pack in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. This was an unprecedented event and devastating to the northwestern Atlantic population that numbers only 200 to 400 individuals. A month later, against all odds, two of the whales washed ashore right on the doorstep of two small communities (Trout River and Rocky Harbour) along the otherwise sparsely inhabited, rugged west coast of Newfoundland.

So began a tragic story that not only captured the hearts of Canadians but attracted media attention throughout the world, including over 1,000 news reports ranging from BBC to Al Jazeera.

Our team of curatorial staff endeavoured to turn this tragic event into a once-in-a-lifetime research and collection opportunity. As part of Canada's sesquicentennial celebrations, the ROM is showcasing several homegrown projects—one of which is exhibiting the magnificence of the largest animal to have ever lived on Earth.

Out of the Depths: The Blue Whale Story will open on March 11, 2017, just in time for March Break. It will be in the Garfield Weston Exhibition Hall at the ROM, and will run for six months. As you're reading this, our team of curatorial and exhibition staff will be putting the finishing touches on what will be a truly awe-inspiring experience for all ages. We would like to provide a sneak peek at the exhibition, but in a somewhat unconventional way—through the perspectives of the team that has brought this magnificent creature, and its remarkable story of tragedy and hope, back to life inside the walls of the ROM.

Although the complete project team includes many more people than listed here, we hope that this selection provides you with an appreciation for the diversity of talent and expertise required to mount such a project.

As well, through their eyes, you will learn some surprising facts about blue whales and the exhibition itself.



MARK ENGSTROM

Deputy Director, Collections & Research, Senior Curator of Mammais

"I want to share the stories of these marine mammals, and inspire others to be awed by nature."



What was the most surprising thing you learned about blue whales during the project?

Although there is some great research being done on blue whales, including in the Gulf of St. Lawrence in eastern Canada, and right here at the ROM, there is still so much we don't know. Where they go to give birth remains a mystery. We'd love to unlock secrets in their genome and understand where they fit on the evolutionary tree of life—and how they got so big!

How does the blue whale project relate to your day job—has it helped you improve your work?

I was hired by the museum to study rodents but have taken on the administrative task of overseeing the collections and research at the ROM. But recently, I have been interested in whales and have accumulated six different species. I hope one day the blue whale will join the others in a permanent gallery—the Canadian Gallery of Whales. I want to share the stories of these marine mammals, and inspire others to be awed by nature.



GEORGIA GUNTHER

Exhibit Artist

What was the most surprising thing you learned about blue whales during the project?

I've always known that blue whales have baleen and eat krill, and that they have pleats in their throat sac. But, when I watched a video of a blue whale feeding, I was astounded by the vast volume of seawater that a whale can take into its mouth in a single gulp. In fact, a blue whale needs to take about 70 gulps per day (on average) to feed its huge appetite.

How does the blue whale project relate to your day jobhas it helped you improve your work?

It's not a fluke that I'm working on this project. My job is to make the unseen seen. Modelling a worm and a sauropod to demonstrate that the blue whale is in fact the biggest animal to have ever lived was a first for me, and I hope it helps our audience appreciate the enormity of the project.





"We debunk the myth that a human could swim down the main artery of the heart."

What was the most surprising thing you learned about blue whales during the project?

There is an incredible amount of literature, scientific or otherwise, written about blue whales, but so much of it is conjecture and based on myth. We have learned a great deal about the biology of blue whales while preparing this exhibition, and for me one of the most surprising myths we debunk is that a human could swim down the main artery of the heart. It's big, but not that big.

How does the blue whale project relate to your day job-has it helped you improve your work? Although I've been around the ROM for a while, I'm relatively new to the full-time staff of the Department of Natural History, so this is the first big project I've been a part of—it's been a really fast learning curve! I've coordinated the entire process of the plastination of the heart, and this has helped me understand tricky loan processes and how to acquire big shipping containers.





"They put more effort into just living than you could ever fathom."



What was the most surprising thing you learned about blue whales during the project? Everything! Especially that blue whale poo helps

fight climate change. But what I really didn't realize was just how incredible these creatures are. I pictured blue whales as large, slow, easy-going animals. But their movements, their sounds, their biology...they put much more effort into just living than we could ever fathom. Like when they feed, they lunge forward so hard that the drag from the water actually stops them in their tracks.

How does the blue whale project relate to your day job—has it helped you improve your work?

My job is to help figure out the best way to present information. This time, we had one object only—the whale. We had to portray all our blue whale info in ways that didn't rely on objects or text alone. We're working on models, interactives, videos, and some amazing experiences for visitors. This project has trained me to be more creative in my approach to interpretation, and to trust that simple ideas can have a big impact.

exhibition





What was the most surprising thing you learned about blue whales during the project?

I've always known that the blue whale was the largest whale in the world...but didn't actually realize it's the largest animal ever. Going through the videos and stills of the blue whale for research purposes was truly shocking to me at first. The blue whale can be up to 30 metres long! That's more than the length of a basketball court! I can't wait to see the look in our visitors' eyes when they first see our whale. I'm sure it'll be a memory that they never forget.

How does the blue whale project relate to your day job—has it helped you improve your work? Until this project, I've mainly been dealing with our smaller exhibits, permanent galleries, and

the website. Those are smaller-scale productions and we rely on lots of in-house resources. This exhibition is a much bigger production and we had the opportunity to work with some of the top interactive designers in the country. It's nice to be able to work with the latest storytelling technologies!

"A blue whale can be up to 30 metres long. That's more than the length of a basketball court."





What was the most surprising thing you learned about blue whales during the project?

Considering the size of these creatures, they are hard to miss but at the same time surprisingly hard to find. I found it incredible that biologists still know very little about the biggest animal to have ever lived—this is encouraging, though, because our exhibition and program will help improve our knowledge, and yours.

How does the blue whale project relate to your day jobhas it helped you improve your work?

Each exhibition requires a different design approach, particularly natural history exhibitions, but the blue whale exhibition is unique in no small part to the specimen's massive scale. But even more so was the challenge of presenting ideas, not just artifacts or objects, to the public in a meaningful and engaging way—this challenge made me a better designer.

BLUE WHALE AT THE ROM

As you can tell by these responses, the blue whale, although the largest animal to have ever lived, has many secrets yet to share. The tragedy of 2014 must be placed in a broader context, and we must remember that not so long ago humans almost eliminated the species entirely. Our team is energized and excited to build upon this exhibition and the

mysteries that remain about blue whales to ask new questions and provide better experiences for all ROM visitors that will help you understand and appreciate the world around us.

Exhibition opens Saturday, March 11, 2017. For more information visit rom.on.ca/bluewhale. **Exhibition Patron: The Dorothy Strelsin Foundation**

Supporting Sponsor







he Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition comes from humble beginnings that date back to 1965, when the competition behind it had only three categories with 500 participants in total. In the 52 years since then, it has grown to thousands of participants from countries across the globe, and it showcases the best nature photography the world has to offer. The contest has 16 categories for adults, such as creative visions, animal portraits, and urban wildlife, just to name a few; and three age-range categories for the 17-and-under participants. The exhibition begins in London, then travels around the globe and is seen by millions. This critically acclaimed Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition is back at the ROM for a fourth year. Even if you are not a photographer, this exhibition will entice you with a brand new set of photographs, from stunning landscapes to incredible macro shots of insects, and images of colourful birds and surreal natural events. The 100 photographs from this year's contest provide a unique opportunity to celebrate biodiversity and the beauty of our world.

GOLDEN RELIC

Dhyey Shah



exhibition

PLAYING PANGOLIN

Lance van de Vyver New Zealand/ South Africa

 \downarrow

TERMITE TOSSING

Willem Kruger South Africa





SPLITTING THE CATCH

Audun Rikardsen Norway

BLAST FURNACE

Alexandre Hec France



NOSY NEIGHBOUR

Sam Hobson UK





THE DISAPPEARING FISH

lago Leonardo SPAIN

> HOW TO SEE IT

On now until **March 19** in the Roloff Beny Gallery (Level 4). Go to **rom.on.ca/en/wildlife2016** for more information.

Wildlife Photographer of the Year is developed and produced by the Natural History Museum, London.



ROMTRAVEL

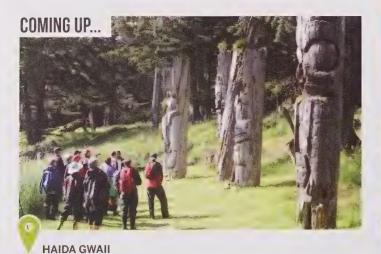
MAY 7 TO 28, 2018

MIDDLE KINGDOM

THE ESSENCE OF CHINA

Join ROM Curator Chen Shen, Vice President, Senior Curator and Chairholder of the Bishop White Chair of East Asian Art and Archaeology on a journey through China's Middle Kingdom. See timeless treasures in bustling Beijing, dig into the roots of Chinese civilization with the Terracotta Warriors near Xian, and study the carvings illustrating Buddhist, Confucian, and Taoist beliefs in Dazu. Explore the mysterious Bronze Age sites at Sanxingdui and Jinsha, and pamper the pandas at Chengdu. View the amazing giant Buddha at Leshan and finish up in cosmopolitan Hong Kong, the Pearl of the Orient. Private visits at museums, archaeological sites, and nine UNESCO World Heritage sites will provide a truly VIP experience.





Visit Haida Gwaii, Canada's Galapagos, one of the richest biological and cultural areas in North America.

Medieval, modern, and mysterious Japan is a delight for the senses.

JUNE 9 TO 18, 2017

NOVEMBER 5 TO 18, 2017

JAPAN (SOLD OUT)





An odyssey to the mainland, Crete and Santorini reveals the splendours of ancient $\mbox{\it Greece}.$

SPRING 2018



Bob McDonald of CBC's $\it Quirks$ and $\it Quarks$ provides insight into Russia's space program. Explore the treasures of Imperial Russia.

SUMMER 2018

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rom.on.ca/travel



ROMWALKS

DISCOVER YOUR CITY & BEYOND

Join fellow ROM Members and see Toronto in a new light

ROMWalks are fun and informative walking tours of Toronto, each encompassing a unique and diverse aspect of Toronto's vibrant neighbourhoods, including history, architecture, arts of all varieties, education, and more.

Most walking tours are free. For information on ROMWalks and an updated schedule, visit **rom.on.ca/en/whats-on**.

ROMBUS



These unique programs offer day trips to historical, architectural, and cultural sites of interests in Toronto and the surrounding area. This year watch for upcoming ROMBus adventures starting in March that will have a focus on the new *Out of the Depths* blue whale exhibition (see page 26). Other excursions planned include an architectural tour of Toronto's historic fire halls with the ROM's Corey Keeble, as well as a tour of Hamilton, which is more than Canada's "steel city."

Unless otherwise stated, ROMWalks tours are free and offered exclusively to ROM Members. All ROMWalks and ROMBus events require **registration**, as **space** is **limited**. Register at **rom.on.ca/members/events** or **416.586.5700**. Walks last approximately 1.5 to 2 hours.

CANADIAN, NATURALLY...

One-of-a-kind creations for your home

This eye-catching 36"-diameter bowl was created by Stinson Studios (based in Tamworth, Ont.) and was carved out of a rare growth of wood called a burl. Burls typically form around unusual branch growth and are prized for their rare figuring. The burled section of the tree is cut, carved, and finished depending on the shape of the section of burl itself. Navigating the unique undulations, cavities, flaws, and other characteristics within each burl is a skill that takes years to master. The artists of Stinson Studios, father Don, and sons Jesse and Spike, create these artistic works, each highlighting the true beauty of the wood from which they were carved. Smaller burled, and conventional turned bowls, are also available from Stinson.





hoto by Sian Richards.

rom governors

creating the next century together



A TEAM SPORT

All hands on deck for Canada 150

often say that fundraising is a team sport. There are so many moving parts behind the scenes that inspire someone to volunteer, make a donation, or become a Patron at the ROM. Long before a fundraiser begins a conversation with a donor, there is a point of inspiration—it could be a visionary concept from a ROM educator, a pioneering program by a staff member, or the desire to exhibit the remarkable research of one of our world-class curators.

Similarly, every experience with the ROM influences how and when a donor chooses to support it—from fond childhood memories of Saturday Morning Club, to learning something new with friends at a fun event like Friday Night Live or the annual Eva Holtby Lecture on Contemporary Culture, or simply exploring an exciting exhibition with family.

These innovative ideas and memorable experiences are vital to the ROM's role as an iconic Canadian institution. Our stellar team—and all the moving parts behind it—are coming together in an incredible way this year to

celebrate Canada's 150th anniversary. We have some amazing plans to surprise and delight, including exclusive Patron tours through the Louise Hawley Stone Curatorial Centre, a beautiful donor recognition mural that will pop up in the Hyacinth Gloria Chen Crystal Court in March, and a spectacular black-tie gala on May 6, 2017.

Thank you for the many ways—both big and seemingly small— in which you support the ROM. It has a tremendous impact on the work we are able to accomplish and share with our community. In celebration of our great nation's sesquicentennial, let's work together to make 2017 the biggest and brightest year yet for the ROM.

Susan

SUSAN HORVATH PRESIDENT & CEO RPC FELLOW



CONGRATULATIONS!

On behalf of the ROM, congratulations to all the recipients of the 2016 Association of Fundraising Professionals Philanthropy Awards!

On November 23, 2016, Susan Horvath was honoured with the Outstanding Fundraising Professional award for the remarkable difference she has made throughout her 26 years of fundraising leadership in health care, education, research, and social services. Together with ROM donors, volunteers, and staff, she is working to give more Canadians the opportunity to enjoy transformational experiences of discovery at the Museum and mentoring the next generation of passionate fundraisers.

GET IN TOUCH

416.586.8055 susanh@rom.on.ca rom.on.ca/support @SusanH_ROM MEET THE CURATORS



SANTIAGO CLARAMUNT

Santiago Claramunt, Curator of Ornithology at the ROM, shares why he's excited to join the Museum and how his work is contributing to our understanding of the long history of organic evolution that we share.

How did you first get into your field?

I've loved nature and science since I can remember. I used to stay up late watching *Cosmos* or Jacques Cousteau's documentaries. As a teenager, I joined a group of friends interested in faunistic studies and we conducted field trips to observe and collect frogs, reptiles, small mammals, and birds. At that point, I decided that I wanted to become a scientist dedicated to the study of birds.

Can you tell us about why your research is important?

I'm contributing to the understanding of the processes that generate biological diversity through space and time. I'm also generating information that is relevant for conservation, including estimates of the dispersal ability of birds, which is crucial for assessing population dynamics and vulnerability to climate change.

ROM curators change the way we understand and experience our evolving world. Meet our newest world experts!

What's exciting about working at the ROM?

The ROM combines an amazing set of resources, including vast collections, world-class facilities, and talented staff. The bird collection is huge and includes specimens from all around the world. We can do cutting-edge research here. I also like the fact that the ROM encompasses art, culture, and nature. It's impossible not to be excited about working at a place like the ROM.

What are you currently working on?

I'm reconstructing evolutionary relationships among several groups of passerine birds, as well as devising new strategies

to calibrate "molecular clocks" so we can determine when evolutionary events occurred. I'm also investigating ways of estimating the relative dispersal ability of bird species from the morphology and genomes of research specimens. This year, I'll be visiting Peru to obtain valuable new specimens for our collections. This will increase the ROM's taxonomic coverage of birds from that part of the world—one of the richest in terms of number of species, and not yet adequately represented in our collections.

What are some of the challenges of your work?

The rapid advance of technology and knowledge—you need to be learning and evolving all the time. Discoveries about the function and evolution of genomes are transforming our field and the way we conduct research.

Tell us about an exciting discovery or moment in your research.

In a recent study, together with my colleague Joel Cracraft, bird curator at the American Museum of Natural History, we discovered that modern birds originated in South America. When the first round of analyses came out, I was fascinated but skeptical, and then further analyses confirmed the initial findings.

What's next for you in your career?

I'm looking forward to developing my research program, expanding our bird collections and resources to increase their usefulness for researchers here and abroad, and being involved in public programs and exhibitions.

Do you have a favourite item in the collection?

The collection of tropical Tanagers—when you open that drawer, it's like a collection of gemstones glowing in an incredible variety of colours.





CRAIG CIPOLLA

We caught up with Craig Cipolla, Associate Curator, North American Archaeology, on his return from a research trip dedicated to collaborative archaeological fieldwork with the Mohegan Tribe on their reservation lands in Connecticut. Cross-appointed as a University of Toronto professor, Craig has been widely published and has received major grants from the National Science Foundation and the European Commission.

How did you get into archaeology?

During my undergrad, I did fieldwork at a seventeenth-century plantation site on Shelter Island, New York. This project examined the historical "entanglements" of European colonists, enslaved Africans, and Native American labourers. From there, I was hooked.

Can you tell us about why your research is important?

I strive to create new means of working with—and learning from—Indigenous communities. My goal is to make the archaeological process more visible and relevant to Indigenous communities, while maintaining academic rigour.

What are you currently working on?

I just co-authored a book *Archaeological Theory in the New Millennium* and completed an edited volume, *Foreign Objects*. I'm also leading repatriation projects with First Nations and curating an exhibition for 2017 called *Vikings: The Exhibition*.

What inspires you?

Building relationships with Indigenous communities and exchanging ideas as we conduct research together.

What's next for you?

I hope to conduct research in Ontario, starting with collections-based inquiry and then archaeological fieldwork.

What do you hope people learn from the ROM?

I'd like visitors to gain a more nuanced understanding of Indigenous history in this region and the issues faced by First Peoples today.

Do you have a favourite object at the ROM?

It would have to be a seventeenth-century rosary recovered from a Huron-Wendat village in Simcoe County, Ontario, which speaks to the cultural interactions from the colonization of present-day Canada.



CREATE A **LEGACY**

Every gift to the ROM has meaningful impact. To learn more about how you can support the Museum through a gift in your will, please contact Janice Correa at janicec@rom.on.ca or 416.586.5578.

The late Robert Ellsworth at home in New York with various Ming dynasty pieces.

A Crowning Gift from the King of Ming

ROBERT FLLSWORTH'S LEGACY IN THE MAKING

A celebrated collector and benefactor of Asian art. Robert Ellsworth will forever advance new acquisitions and knowledge at the ROM through a \$10.3-million bequest.

Ellsworth was born in New York City at the onset of the Great Depression in 1929. His inspiring story took its most fortuitous turn when as a young boy, he met Alice Boney, a prominent art dealer. Under her tutelage, he developed his early fascination with antiquity into a distinguished career and pioneered new arenas of collection and scholarship in Chinese art-achievements that saw him lauded as the

"King of Ming" by The New York Times.

Following his passing in 2014, Ellsworth's legacy culminated in a transformational gift to the ROM. An avid patron and scholar of the arts during his lifetime, Ellsworth was a passionate advocate who believed that collections should not only be widely shared with the public, but should also be treated as source material, made available for the study of art and culture. Now, through an endowment fund established through his estate, Ellsworth's vision will be reaffirmed at the ROM, and his legacy will impact visitors for generations to come.

"Robert admired the quality of the ROM's collections, having worked with the Museum's curators," says Masa Hashiguchi, Ellsworth's partner and estate executor. "He was proud to include the ROM in his will, among other prestigious institutions, including the Met, Harvard, Yale, and NYU." By supporting new acquisitions and storage of Chinese art and cultural objects, this fund will help elevate the ROM's renowned East Asian collections to impressive new heights, greatly expanding exhibition and programming possibilities for audiences.

To ensure that the ROM is able to uncover the deepseated insights within these objects for museumgoers today and tomorrow, the fund will also permanently secure the curatorial resources necessary to expound new knowledge.

"The ROM is truly grateful for this profound gesture of generosity," says Josh Basseches, ROM Director & CEO. "Not only does this gift signify the status of the ROM's collections on the global stage, it also underscores the Museum's immense potential to continue transforming scholarship in Chinese art for audiences worldwide."



mann cabinet is part of the Bernard and Svivia Ostry Collection. Purchased with funds from the Louise Hawley Stone Charitable Trust.

Ruhlmann Cabinet

After taking over his father's decorating business, Jacques-Émile Ruhlmann spread his ideas of decorating throughout the luxury market of Paris, which included everything a classic French interior required. This small two-door cabinet, in the style known as a chiffonier, embodies his idea of the French cabinetmaking traditions of the eighteenth century; it has gently swelling surfaces veneered with exotic woods. Ruhlmann used Macassar ebony inlaid in a lozenge pattern with ivory on a mahogany carcass, with ivory feet, and handles. The interior is fitted with shelves and a removable unit of three small drawers. Referred to as the Cabanel model, no. 15227, it was originally designed in 1920-21 and named for the couturière Fernande Cabanel, who was probably the first client to have one. Ruhlmann's furniture and interior designs epitomized the finest of art deco style and brought wallpaper, painted finishes, and mirrors to the luxury market of Paris.

"When I gaze at it, I am reminded of a muscular barrel-chested man standing firmly on his two legs, dressed in a perfectly tailored suit. Refined yet athletic."

-LYNDA REEVES

Publisher of House & Home magazine







Proud to support Isaac Julien: Other Destinies.

We are working together with the Royal Ontario Museum to make a difference in our communities.

